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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/662,463	09/15/2000	Charles Petrucci	9547-3	3649

20322 7590 06/24/2004

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EXAMINER

OUELLETTE, JONATHAN P

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

3629

DATE MAILED: 06/24/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

**Office Action Summary**

Application No.

09/662,463

Applicant(s)

PETRUCCELLI ET AL.

Examiner

Jonathan Ouellette

Art Unit

3629

MLL

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

**Period for Reply**

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

**Status**

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 02 March 2004.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

**Disposition of Claims**

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-32 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-32 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

**Application Papers**

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

**Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119**

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
  3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

**Attachment(s)**

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)             | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)                     |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)     | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____  |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____   | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____                                    |

## **DETAILED ACTION**

### ***Response to Amendment***

1. Claims 27-32 have been added; therefore, Claims 1-32 are currently pending in application 09/662,463.

### **Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 101**

2. The rejection of Claims 1-26 under 35 U.S.C. 101 is with drawn due to applicant's amendment.

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

3. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:  
  
  - (a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.
4. **Claims 1-26 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lauffer (US 6,223,165 B1) in view of Taufique (WO 01/20518 A1).**
5. As per Claims 1, 8, 9, 13, and 20, Lauffer discloses a method (system, computer-readable storage, device) for facilitating the distribution of travel-related information, comprising: communicating with a customer over a computer network, wherein communicating with the customer includes receiving contact information from the customer; identifying a plurality of experts, wherein the plurality of experts are in selective communication with

a destination expert server; receiving from the customer a request relating to a destination city to which the customer desires to travel; facilitating a selection of a destination expert from the plurality of experts, wherein the destination expert has particular knowledge about the destination city (Abstract, C1 L19-67, C2 L1-36, C4 L46-67, C5 L1-10, C6 L1-28, Claims 1-19).

6. Lauffer fails to expressly disclose forwarding the customer's request and the customer's contact information to the destination expert, such that the destination expert can communicate with the customer to provide response to the customer request.
7. However, Lauffer does disclose matching the customer with an expert, and supplying the customer with the experts contact information – so the customer can contact the expert to obtain information (C4 L46-60).
8. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have included forwarding the customer's request and the customer's contact information to the destination expert, such that the destination expert can communicate with the customer to provide response to the customer request, in the system disclosed by Lauffer, for the advantage of providing a method (system, computer-readable storage, device) for providing travel-related information, with the ability to increase customer security by providing the customer with expert contact information, allowing the customer to remain anonymous.
9. Lauffer also fails to expressly disclose retrieving from an answer database, an answer to the customer request, such that the destination expert response includes the retrieved answer.

10. However, Taufique discloses retrieving answers to related previously answered questions for system users upon request (pg.6-8).
11. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have included retrieving from an answer database, an answer to the customer request, such that the destination expert response includes the retrieved answer as disclosed by Taufique, in the system disclosed by Lauffer, for the advantage of providing a method (system, computer-readable storage, device) for providing travel-related information, with the ability to increase system effectiveness and efficiency by recycling frequently asked/answered questions to system users requiring similar knowledge.
12. As per Claims 2, 10, 14, and 21, Lauffer and Taufique fail to expressly disclose wherein facilitating selection of a destination expert comprises determining a destination expert of the plurality of experts, wherein the destination expert is located in the destination city or confirming that the destination expert is familiar with the destination.
13. However, Lauffer does disclose obtaining expert characteristics to include: details of expertise, address, and quality scores (Abstract, C1 L19-67, C2 L1-36).
14. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have included wherein determining a destination expert comprises determining a destination expert of the plurality of experts, wherein the destination expert is located in the destination city or confirming that the destination expert is familiar with the destination, in the system disclosed by Lauffer, for the advantage of providing a method (system, computer-readable storage, device) for providing travel-related

information, with the ability to increase quality service by ensuring the experts have the qualification necessary to offer correct advice.

15. As per Claims 3, 15, and 22, *Lauffer* and *Taufique* disclose wherein communicating with the customer over the computer network includes receiving a credit card number from the customer.
16. As per Claims 4, 16, and 23, *Lauffer* and *Taufique* fail to expressly disclose wherein the destination expert response includes an offer to book reservations relating to the customer request.
17. However, official notice is given (and accepted by applicant – as indicated by lack of response in remarks received 3/2/04) that such reservation booking services were well known at the time the invention was made, and it would have been obvious to include such a booking service in the system disclosed by *Lauffer*, for the advantage of providing a method (system, computer-readable storage, device) for providing travel-related information, with the ability to increase customer satisfaction by completing the travel related inquiry by booking the travel related service.
18. As per Claims 5, 17, and 24, *Lauffer* and *Taufique* disclose receiving the destination expert response from the destination expert and forwarding the destination expert response to the customer.
19. As per Claims 6, 18, and 25, *Lauffer* and *Taufique* disclose facilitating a transaction with the customer, wherein the transaction relates to the customer request.
20. As per Claims 7, 19, and 26, *Lauffer* and *Taufique* disclose monitoring communications of the destination expert server.

21. As per Claim 11, *Lauffer* and *Taufique* disclose wherein the destination expert server is accessible to the customer via the Internet.
22. As per Claim 12, *Lauffer* and *Taufique* disclose wherein the plurality of experts is in selective communication with the destination expert server via electronic mail.
23. As per Claims 27, 29, and 31, *Lauffer* and *Taufique* disclose wherein the step of retrieving an answer from an answer database is performed automatically without intervention by the destination expert.
24. As per Claims 28, 30, and 32, *Lauffer* and *Taufique* disclose transmitting the automatically retrieved answer to the customer.

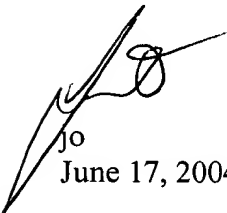
***Response to Arguments***

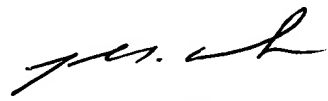
25. Applicant's arguments filed 3/2/04, with respect to Claims 1-32, have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.
26. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).
27. A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any

extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

***Conclusion***

28. Additional Non-Patent Literature has been referenced on the attached PTO-892 form, and the Examiner suggests the applicant review these documents before submitting any amendments.
29. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Jonathan Ouellette whose telephone number is (703) 605-0662. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Thursday, 8am - 5:00pm.
30. If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, John Weiss can be reached on (703) 308-2702. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned (703) 872-9306 for all official communications.
31. Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 306-5484.

  
Jo  
June 17, 2004

  
JOHN G. WEISS  
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER  
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